

Local Government in Maine

~ Government is People ~

Bar Harbor Charter Commission

January 14, 2009

Maine Local Government

- ❖ What are the forms of government?
- ❖ What is included in a municipal charter?

Forms of Local Government

1. Town Meeting – Selectmen
2. Town Meeting – Selectmen – Manager
3. Town Meeting – Council – Manager
4. Council – Manager
5. Mayor – Council

1. Town Meeting – Selectmen

Town Meeting

- ❖ After 300 year, still used by 184 of 491 Maine Towns
 - ❖ Exercises All Legislative Authority

Selectmen

- ❖ 3 to 7 Select “Members” Elected by Town Meeting
 - ❖ Have only Executive Authority

2. Town Meeting – Selectmen – Manager

Manager

- ❖ Elected (Hired) by Selectmen
- ❖ Selected for Professional Experience & Training
- ❖ Runs the day to day business of the Town

Administrative Assistant

- ❖ Less Authority than a Manager
- ❖ 223 Maine Towns Have Mgr. or AA

3. Town Meeting – Council – Manager

- ❖ Bar Harbor's Current Form of Government
- ❖ Town Retains Some Legislative Authority
 - ✓ Budget, Bonding, Land Use Ordinance, Charter
- ❖ Town Shares Legislative Authority with Council
 - ✓ Ordinances: Traffic, Parking, Dogs, Noise, etc.
 - ✓ Fees: Building Permits, Licenses, etc.
- ❖ Manager has Hiring Authority
- ❖ Used by 18 Maine Towns

4. Council – Manager

- ❖ Most Popular Municipal Government in U.S.
 - ✓ Created 1908 in Staunton, Virginia
 - ✓ Professionalized Municipal Administration
 - ✓ Modeled on Private Business
- ❖ Town Invests Full Legislative Power in Its Elected Officials: City Council
- ❖ Most Often 5, 7 or 9 Elected Councilors
- ❖ Used by 18 Maine Towns

5. Mayor – Council

- ❖ Only Mayor-Council City in Maine: Westbrook
- ❖ City Council has all Legislative Authority
- ❖ Mayor has all Executive Authority
 - ✓ Mayor is Elected by Voters
 - ✓ Can veto legislation
 - ✓ Otherwise, Similar to a City Manager's Duties
- ❖ Chief Elected Official often called “Mayor”
 - ✓ Except in Westbrook, has very limited powers

Forms of Local Government

1. Town Meeting – Selectmen

Forms of Local Government

1. Town Meeting – Selectmen
2. Town Meeting – Selectmen – Manager

Forms of Local Government

1. Town Meeting – Selectmen
2. Town Meeting – Selectmen – Manager
3. Town Meeting – Council – Manager

Forms of Local Government

1. Town Meeting – Selectmen
2. Town Meeting – Selectmen – Manager
3. Town Meeting – Council – Manager
4. Council – Manager

Forms of Local Government

1. Town Meeting – Selectmen
2. Town Meeting – Selectmen – Manager
3. Town Meeting – Council – Manager
4. Council – Manager
5. Mayor – Council

Forms of Local Government

1. Town Meeting – Selectmen
2. Town Meeting – Selectmen – Manager
3. Town Meeting – Council – Manager
4. Council – Manager
5. Mayor – Council

~ And Everything in Between ~

Government by Charter

~ And Everything in Between ~

Government by Charter

❖ Magna Carta – 1615

- Grant of Power from King (Government) to People

Government by Charter

❖ Magna Carta – 1615

➤ Grant of Power by the Government to the People

❖ U.S. Constitution – 1787

➤ Grant of Power by the People to the Government

Government by Charter

❖ Magna Carta – 1615

❖ U.S. Constitution – 1787

❖ Constitution of Maine – 1820

Government by Charter

- ❖ Magna Carta – 1615
- ❖ U.S. Constitution – 1787
- ❖ Constitution of Maine – 1820
- ❖ Bar Harbor Town Charter – 1948

What's in a Charter?

Grant of Power from the People to their Govt.

- Who's in charge?
- To whom are they responsible?
- What do they have to ask us about first?
- How do we change things?

What's in Our Charter?

- I. Grants of Power to the Town
- II. Town Meetings
- III. The Town Council
- IV. The Town Manager
- V. Administrative Organization
- VI. Financial Procedures
- VII. Warrant Committee

What Else is in Our Charter?

VIII. Elections and Nominations

IX. Initiative and Referendum

X. General Provisions

XI. Transitional Provisions

Local Government in Maine

~ Government is People ~

Credits: Maine Municipal Association